

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GUIDELINES



TO ASSIST THE PROPERTY OWNER
IN FORMULATING
PRESERVATION PLANS

Baltimore City
Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation

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BALTIMORE CITY COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

A. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with its authority (Ordinance #939), the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) has adopted architectural guidelines to assist the property owner in formulating preservation plans. These advisory guidelines also serve to assist the Commission in determining the appropriateness of such plans. CHAP realizes that it must also consider economic hardship and particular factors.

Ordinance No. 229 approved the Mayor and City May 21, 1964 created CHAP, authorized the Commission or adopt rules and regulations necessary to transact the business of the Commission, and establish procedures for designating historic districts. Ordinance No. 939, approved March 2, 1967, expanded the duties of CHAP and created the Landmark List.

An historic district is "an area in Baltimore City wherein, there are located buildings and structures which have historic, cultural, educational and/or architectural value, the preservation of which is deemed to be for the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the inhabitants of Baltimore City."

A *Landmark* is a structure, public or private, of special historic and architectural significance.

Structure is defined as "any creation of man or nature."

For any property located within the boundaries of an historic district or for any landmark, CHAP must approve the following: "any excavation, construction or erection of any building, fence, wall, or other structure of any kind; or for any removal of any external architectural feature, or for any reconstruction, alteration, change to exterior color by painting or other means, or for any demolition of any structure." CHAP's approval is based upon the appropriateness of the proposed work, taking into consideration "the historic or architectural value and color of the exterior architectural features of other structures in the immediate neighborhood."

The following guidelines are in addition to all prevailing laws and are in no way to be construed to diminish the force of existing requirements of urban renewal plans and standards (where applicable), building codes, zoning codes, etc. It is the property owner's responsibility to contact all the appropriate City agencies and to comply with all existing laws and codes.

Where special techniques or materials are required the CHAP office can provide a bibliography of reference and source information.

B. PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING NOTICE TO PROCEED

A building permit application is required before any proposed exterior work proceeds on an historic property. The application is filled out at the Plans Examining and Permit Section of the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), which forwards a copy of the application to CHAP. (The Permit Section office is located in Room 100, 417 E. Fayette Street, Phone: 396-3361). The applicant can then contact CHAP (Phone: 396-4866) to schedule a public hearing review, or upon receipt of the application the CHAP office will contact the property owner. A public hearing will be arranged at which CHAP review the proposed plans. After approval the CHAP office will issue a "Notice to Proceed" to the applicant and send a copy to the Permit

Section of HCD, which will then issue the building permit. "Notice to Proceed" is not a building permit. The building permit is obtained from HCD.

Where zoning variances are required, the "Zoning" section of the building permit application must be approved prior to the CHAP hearing. CHAP public hearings are held on alternating Friday afternoons (every two weeks) in 417 E. Fayette Street. At the scheduled hearing the applicant must present sketches, plans, photographs, and sample materials which illustrate the type of work to be done.

Any person aggrieved by the Commission's decision may appeal to the Baltimore City Court, in accordance with the procedures in the CHAP ordinance.

C. GUIDELINES

1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following guidelines are designed to help property owners formulate plans for the rehabilitation, preservation, and continued use of old buildings consistent with the intent of CHAP. The guidelines pertain to buildings of all occupancy and construction types, sizes, and materials. They apply to permanent and temporary construction on the exterior of historic buildings as well as new attached or adjacent construction.

Generally, it is recommended that deteriorated material be repaired, or replaced with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. New material which is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as artificial brick siding, artificial cast stone or brick veneer, is discouraged.

All buildings, structures, and sites should be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance are discouraged.

Previous changes to a building, structure, or site and its environment may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected.

2. PAINTING

Paint colors must be submitted to CHAP for approval. Paint permits are issued upon receipt of paint samples. Most paint manufacturers have a line of "historic" colors (which include a wide range of muted colors) and these are preferred.

Repainting should be done with colors appropriate to the period of the building and neighborhood. Incompatible color contrast should be avoided. Upon request the CHAP office will assist in researching appropriate colors for the historic structure or district.

The removal of paint and finishes should be done carefully, using the least abrasive methods. Strong paint strippers, whether chemical or mechanical, should not be used to avoid changes to the surface.

Removing paint from architectural features that were never intended to be exposed is discouraged.

3. MASONRY AND MASONRY CLEANING

a. MASONRY SURFACE AND REPAINTING:

Original masonry should be retained wherever possible, without applying any surface treatment including paint. Repointing of mortar joints that do not need repointing is discouraged.

When repointing is necessary, old mortar should be duplicated in composition, color, texture, method of application and joint profile. Upon completion, the joint should not exceed the width of the original or existing joints.

Repointing with mortar of high Portland cement content should be avoided because it can create a bond that is often stronger than the building material. This can cause deterioration because the cement and brick expand and contract at different rates. The use of electric saws and hammers to remove mortar can seriously damage the adjacent brick, and is strongly discouraged.

b. CLEANING:

The original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces, including early signage, should be retained wherever possible and appropriate. Masonry cleaning should be undertaken only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove graffiti and stains. Indiscriminate removal of paint from certain masonry surfaces may cause damage to the building and may change the character of the building. Brick and stone surfaces were painted or whitewashed in many cases for practical and aesthetic reasons.

When evaluated by CHAP as necessary, the surface cleaning of structures should be done using the least abrasive methods, such as low pressure water and soft natural bristle brushes. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials are discouraged. Requests for sandblasting will be investigated individually by the Commission.

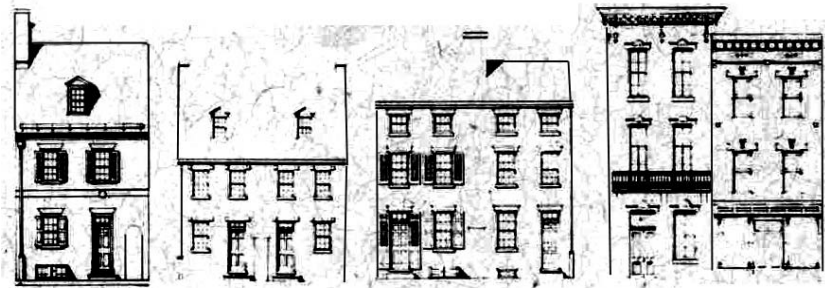
c. STUCCO

Stucco should be repaired with a stucco mixture duplicating the original as closely as possible in appearance and texture. For more information consult the Preservation Briefs available from Technical Preservation Services Division, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Services, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or from CHAP, Room 1037, 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202.

4. DISTINGUISHING ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES AND STYLES

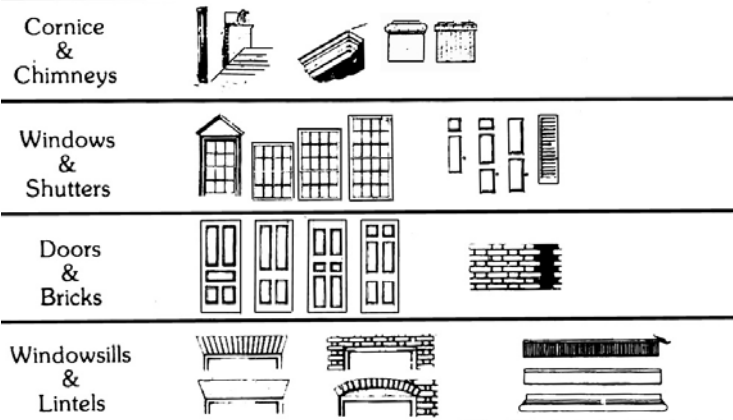
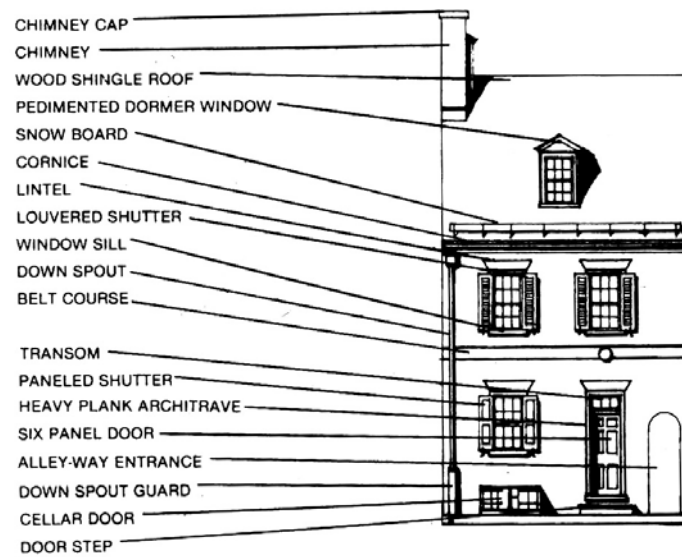
The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment should be retained and treated with sensitivity. The removal or alteration of any historic material or architectural feature should be avoided when possible. Examples of distinctive materials include wood, iron, cast iron, terra cotta, tile and brick. Examples of significant architectural features include cornices, brackets, railings, porches, columns, shutters, window and door molding and details, exterior doors, marble steps, fencing and walls. (See illustration).

Wherever possible, deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjecture, or the availability of inaccurate architectural elements from other buildings or structures. The CHAP office will assist in determining the original nature of architectural features.

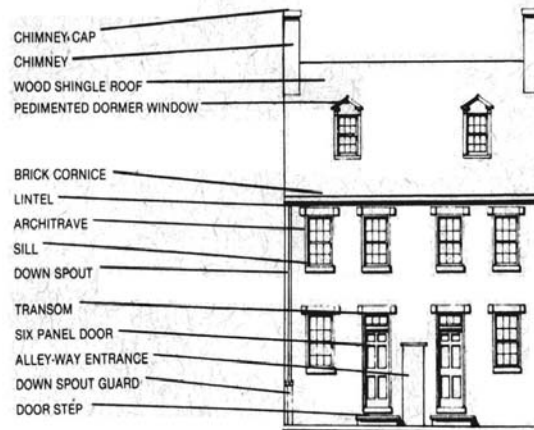


VARIATIONS IN FACADE TYPE

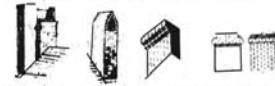
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY



EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY



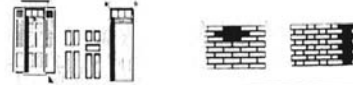
Cornice
&
Chimneys



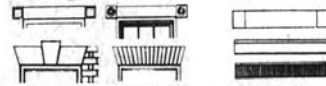
Windows
&
Shutters



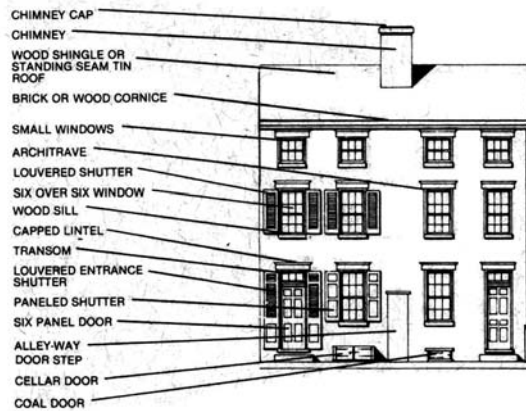
Doors
&
Bricks



Windowsills
&
Lintels



MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY



Cornice
&
Chimneys



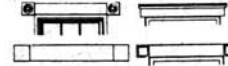
Windows
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Shutters



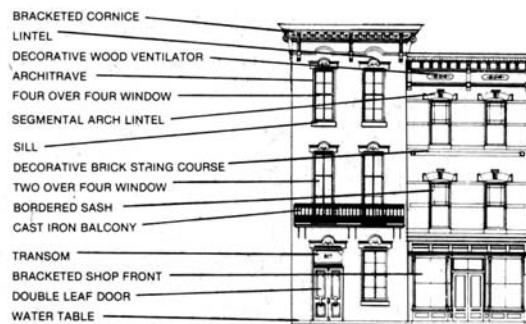
Doors
&
Bricks



Windowsills
&
Lintels



LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY



Cornice
&
Chimneys



Windows
&
Shutters



Doors
&
Bricks



Windowsills
&
Lintels

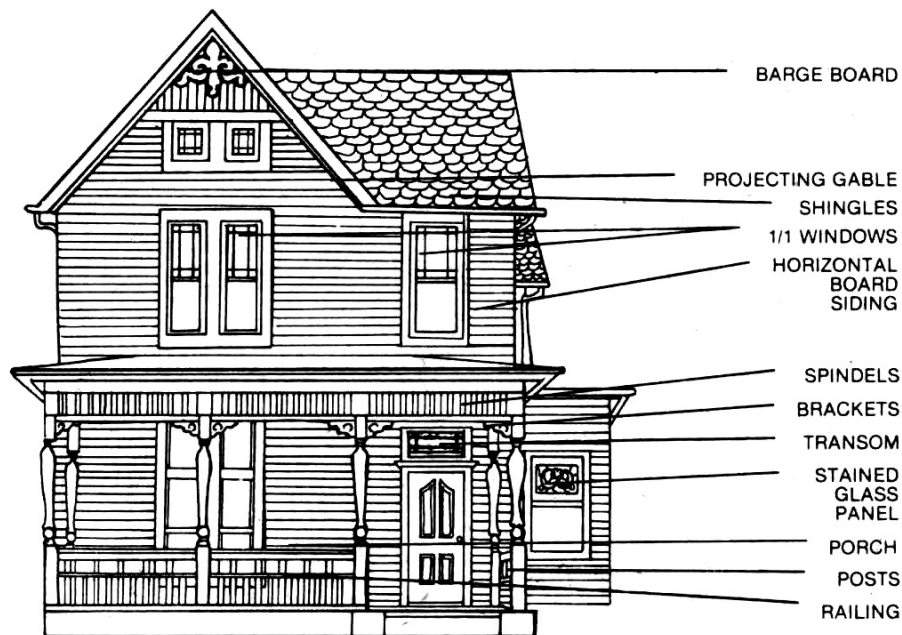


5. FRAME BUILDINGS

Architectural features such as cornices, brackets, window and door molding and details, clapboard, weatherboard, shingles and other wooden siding are essential parts of the character and appearance of frame buildings, illustrating the continuity of growth and change. These significant architectural features should be retained and preserved whenever possible. (See illustration).

Where repair or replacement is necessary, the material should duplicate the size, shape and texture of the old as closely as possible.

Frame buildings should not be resurfaced with new material which either is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, vinyl or aluminum siding. Such material can also contribute to the deterioration of the structure from moisture and insect attack.



6. ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS WHICH ARE MOST COMMONLY REPAIRED OR REPLACED

a. WINDOWS AND DOORS

Existing window and door openings including window sash, glass, lintels, sills, frames, molding, shutters, doors, steps, and all hardware should be retained and repaired wherever possible. Introducing new window or door openings into the principal elevations, or altering window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes is discouraged. Such changes destroy the scale and proportion of the building.

If new sash and doors must be used they should duplicate the material, design and hardware of the older existing ones.

Exterior light fixtures and house numbers should be an appropriate size and placed in an appropriate location. Avoid selecting oversized fixtures. Upon request the CHAP office will assist in researching period fixtures and lettering.

Inappropriate new window or door features are discouraged. These include Plexiglas, aluminum storm and screen window insulating glass combination that require the removal of original window and doors or the installation of plastic, canvas, or metal strip awnings that detract from the character and appearance of the building.

b. STORM WINDOWS:

Storm windows and doors may be installed if they are visually unobtrusive, do not damage existing frames, and can be removed in the future. Storm windows should match the trim color. Mill finished aluminum and vinyl frames can be painted. Stark white aluminum will be discouraged because the finish is an intense artificial color that does not become dull with age. For buildings with white trim or white frame houses, some manufacturers produce an off-white which is more acceptable.

c. PORCHES AND STEPS:

Porches and steps which are appropriate to the building and its development should be retained. Porches or additions reflecting later architectural styles are often important to the building's historical integrity and, wherever possible, should be retained.

The original material and architectural features of porches and steps, such as hand rails, balusters, columns, brackets, and roof decoration of wood, iron, cast iron, terra cotta, tile, and brick should be retained wherever possible. If these materials must be replaced, the new materials should match the old as closely as possible.

d. STAIRWAYS AND FIRE ESCAPE:

New stairways, elevations and fire escapes should be added in a manner which does not alter existing exits or other important architectural features and spaces. These additions must comply with Baltimore City housing and zoning codes. The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) will cooperate in the investigation of alternative life safety measures which preserve the character and architectural integrity of the building. In the case where special approval must be obtained from HCD, written confirmation must be presented to CHAP.

e. ROOFS:

The original roof shape should be preserved.

The original roofing material should be retained, whenever possible. Deteriorated roof coverings should be replaced with new material that matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, texture.

All architectural features which give the roof its essential character, such as dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting, and weather vanes, should be preserved, or replaced, where necessary with new material which duplicates the old.

Adequate roof drainage should be provided to insure that the roofing materials are providing a weather tight covering for the structure, and to assure that water does not splash against building or foundation walls, nor drain toward the building.

f. ARCHITECTURAL METALS:

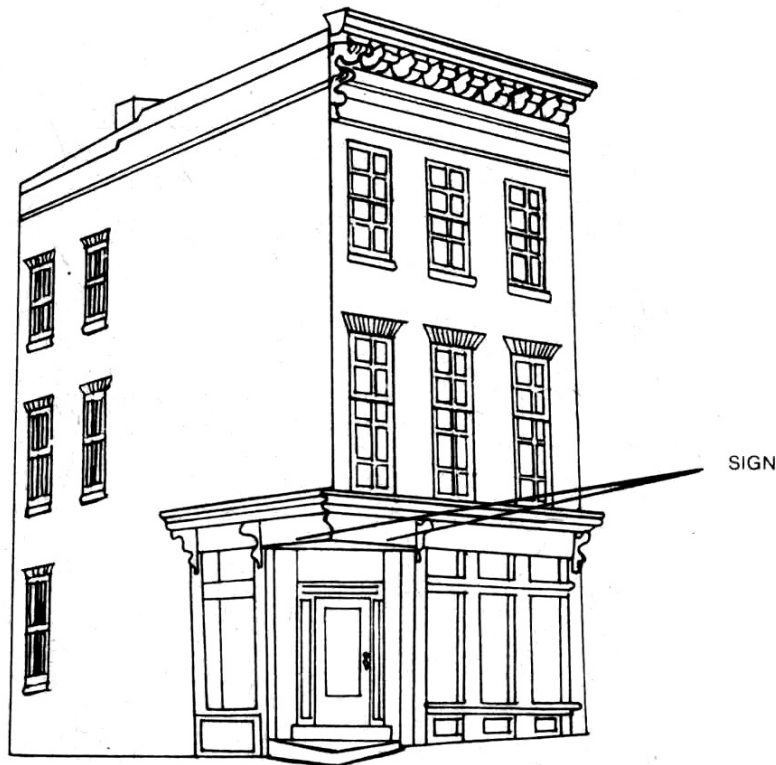
Architectural metals such as cast iron, steel, pressed tin, aluminum and zinc should be cleaned when necessary with an appropriate method. Metals should be cleaned by methods that do not abrade the surface, and which don't alter the color, texture and tone of the metal.

g. WALLS, FENCES AND RAILINGS:

Walls, fences, and railings are important elements of the design and character of a structure and district. CHAP must approve changes to existing elements or designs for new ones. Removal or replacement by inappropriate design or material is discouraged.

h. COMMERCIAL SIGNS:

Signs on commercial buildings should respect the existing architectural features and be compatible in scale, color, material, and design with the building. Generally, neon and/or flashing signs are discouraged. Signs flush with the building's facade are preferred. Signs should be simple, utilizing only the name of the business, and should avoid logos. In many cases historic commercial buildings are also in urban renewal areas and must meet renewal codes and design standards. The Planning Division of HCD can direct the property owner to the respective urban renewal planner (Phone: 396-4220).



7. STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

The special problems inherent in the structural systems of historic buildings must be recognized especially where there are visible signs of cracking, deflection, or failure. Leaving known structural problems untreated will cause continuing deterioration and will shorten the life of the structure.

Weakened, damaged or inadequate structural members and systems should be stabilized, repaired or supplemented when possible. Historically important structural members affecting the exterior appearance should be replaced only when there are no feasible alternatives.

Existing foundations should not be disturbed with new excavations that undermine the structural stability of the building.

8. MECHANICAL SERVICES: HEATING AIR CONDITIONING, ELECTRICAL PLUMBING, TV ANTENNAE, SOLAR PANELS

Necessary mechanical services should be installed in areas and spaces that will require the least possible alteration and damage to the exterior structural condition and physical appearance of the building.

Exterior electrical and telephone cables should be installed in places where they will be visually unobtrusive.

Television antennae and mechanical equipment such as air conditioners and solar panels should be placed in as inconspicuous a location as possible. The installation of such equipment should not affect the principal elevation.

9. NEW CONSTRUCTION

Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties will not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historic, architectural or cultural materials, and the design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood and environment.

Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures should be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were removed in the future, the essential form and character of the historic structure would be unimpaired.

New additions and adjacent reconstruction should be compatible in scale, building materials and texture. New additions should complement the style of the historic structure, but should also appear as products of their own age. Avoid imitating an earlier style of architecture in new additions that have a completely contemporary function. New additions should not imitate architectural styles which pre-date that of the historic structure.

10. BUILDING SITE AND ENVIRONMENT

Distinctive features such as the size, scale, mass, color and materials of buildings, including roofs, porches and stairways that give a neighborhood its distinguishing character should be retained.

Features such as parks, gardens, street lights, signs, benches, , walkways, streets, alleys, plants, trees; fencing, and building set-backs which have traditionally linked buildings to their environment and which reflect the property's history and development, should be retained.

New plant materials, fencing, walkways, etc., may be used if they are compatible with the character of the neighborhood in size, scale, material and color. Decisions for new site work should be based on actual knowledge of the past appearance of the property found in photographs, drawings, newspapers, or tax records. If changes are made they should be carefully evaluated in light of the past appearance of the site.

Introducing new construction into neighborhoods which is incompatible with the character of the district because of size, color, and materials will be discouraged.

Widening of existing streets, changing the paving materials, and introducing new streets and new parking lots should be done in a manner which is compatible with the character of the neighborhood and maintains the relationship of the buildings to the environment.

11. ARCHEOLOGICAL FEATURES

Every reasonable effort should be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by or adjacent to any project.

Known archeological resources should be left intact.

Disturbance of terrain around the structure should be minimized, thus reducing the possibility of destroying unknown archeological resources. Exceptions will of course be made where access for the handicapped is necessary, and a qualified archeologist has documented the site.

An archeological survey by a qualified archeologist of all terrain that must be disturbed during a rehabilitation program should be arranged, where possible.

The installation of underground utilities, pavements, and other modern features that disturb archeological resources should be avoided. Heavy machinery or equipment should not be introduced into areas where their presence may disturb archeological resources.

D. TAX INCENTIVES AND PRESERVATION ASSISTANCE (LOANS AND GRANTS)

Loans and grants are available to assist with the rehabilitation of historic properties. For information about the City and State rehabilitation loans contact the Home Ownership Institute, Department of Housing and Community Development, Suite 1125, 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 (Phone: 396- 4151). For information about the State and Federal preservation loans, grants, and tax incentives, contact the Maryland Historical Trust, Division of Historical and Cultural Programs Third Floor Department of Housing and Community Development 100 Community Place Crownsville, Maryland 21032-2023 (Phone: 410-514-7600)

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Illustrations - Bob Eney
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Funding Assistance - Jolly Company
Hillgartner Natural Stone Company

Graphics and Printing - Baltimore City, Reproduction and Printing Division

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